Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Missouri

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Draft General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement Summary of Key Excerpts

Dear Friends of Ozark National Scenic Riverways,

This document contains key excerpts from the Ozark National Scenic Riverways Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement (Draft GMP). The purpose of the key excerpts is to orient reviewers to important portions of the document and to provide summary information regarding the Draft GMP. It is not a substitute for the GMP, which has more specific and comprehensive information.

This packet contains a copy of the following sections of the Draft GMP:

- Executive summary
- Guide to this document
- Table 2 – Land-Based Management Zones
- Table 3 – River-Based Management Zones
- Table 4 – Motorboat Horsepower Limit by Alternative
- Table 5 – Recreation Activities by Management Zone
- No-Action Map
- Alternative A Map
- Alternative B Map (NPS Preferred Alternative)
- Alternative C Map
- Table 13 – Summary of Key Differences among the Alternatives

The National Park Service values your continued interest and commitment to the future of Ozark National Scenic Riverways. Thank you for your involvement.

Sincerely,

William N. Black
Superintendent

Ozark National Scenic Riverways | Attn: Superintendent
PO Box 490 Van Buren, MO 63965 | ph: 573.323.4236

Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Dear Friends of Ozark National Scenic Riverways,

I am pleased to announce the release of the *Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement* (Draft GMP) for Ozark National Scenic Riverways. The Draft GMP reflects many years of work, and many of you have contributed important information for our consideration in preparing the plan. Stakeholder groups, other agencies, and the general public have all been valuable partners in this effort, and we look forward to meeting with you and discussing the Draft GMP in the coming months.

When completed, the GMP will assist National Park Service managers to protect resources, provide appropriate visitor use, and carry out essential management of the Riverways for at least the next 20 years. The goals and strategies identified in the plan will help fulfill the mission of the National Park Service and Ozark National Scenic Riverways. We believe the NPS Preferred Alternative (identified and described in chapter 2 of the Draft GMP) best achieves these objectives. It is anticipated that the Final GMP and Record of Decision will be completed in 2014 and implementation of the measures identified in the plan will then begin.

There are several opportunities for you to provide your comments and suggestions on the plan over the next 60 days. You may attend and provide comments at public meetings (see dates, locations and times on this letter) submit input through the website listed below, or by mailing your comments to the address listed below. Your views will be carefully considered by NPS planners and managers.

The review period officially begins on November 8 and goes through January 8. The Draft GMP is available for your review and comment at: **http://parkplanning.nps.gov/OZAR** (then go to the "Open for Comment" link). A limited number of paper copies and CDs of the plan are also available upon request by contacting Ozark National Scenic Riverways at the address or phone number listed below.

The National Park Service values your continued interest and commitment to the future of Ozark National Scenic Riverways.
Thank you for your involvement.

Sincerely,

William N. Black
Superintendent

Ozark National Scenic Riverways | Attn: Superintendent
PO Box 490 Van Buren, MO 63965 | ph: 573.323.4236

Tues., Dec. 10, 2013
6-8 p.m. Draft GMP Open House | **8-9 p.m.** Wilderness Hearing
Van Buren Youth & Community Center | ph: (573) 323-8958
Intersection of Business 60 & D Highway | Van Buren, MO 63965

Wed., Dec. 11, 2013
6-8 p.m. Draft GMP Open House | **8-9 p.m.** Wilderness Hearing
Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center | ph: (314) 301-1500
11715 Cragwold Road | Kirkwood, MO 63122

Wed., Dec. 11, 2013
10 a.m.-12 p.m. Draft GMP Open House
Salem City Hall Auditorium | ph: (573) 729-4811
202 North Washington | Salem, MO 65560

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Ozark National Scenic Riverways (the NPS Riverways, National Riverways, or the park unit) was established as a unit of the national park system by the U.S. Congress in 1964. The first general management plan for the National Riverways was completed in 1984, and this plan served the park unit well for many years. However, the 1984 plan is outdated and the NPS Riverways is now facing an increasing array of issues that require guidance through an updated, approved general management plan. A new plan is needed for the following reasons:

- Clearly define resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved at Ozark National Scenic Riverways.
- Provide a framework for National Park Service (NPS) managers to use when making decisions about how to best protect the NPS Riverways' resources, provide a diverse range of visitor experience opportunities, and manage visitor use, and what kinds of facilities, if any, to develop in the National Riverways.
- Ensure that this framework for decision making has been developed in consultation with interested stakeholders and adopted by NPS leadership after adequate analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

THE ALTERNATIVES

This *Ozark National Scenic Riverways Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement* (general management plan) presents four alternatives for the future management of Ozark National Scenic Riverways. Based on the purpose and significance of the NPS Riverways, the alternatives provide different ways to manage resources and visitor use and improve facilities and infrastructure.

The four alternatives are the no-action alternative (continuation of current management) and three action alternatives, designated alternative A, alternative B (NPS preferred), and alternative C. The action alternatives include management zones, which only apply to land areas for which the National Park Service has fee title land ownership. Management zones do not apply to private lands within park boundaries, including private lands with overlaying scenic or conservation easements.

Additional actions and alternatives were considered and dismissed from further analysis. Dismissed actions and the supporting rationale are included in "Chapter 2: Alternatives, Including the Preferred Alternative."

No-action Alternative

The no-action alternative describes how Ozark National Scenic Riverways has been and would continue to be managed without the implementation of an action alternative. It reflects current resource conditions and trends, existing recreational opportunities, types of development, and levels of service. The no-action alternative also describes ongoing management issues, such as resource degradation and visitor conflicts. The primary purpose of the no-action alternative is to establish a baseline for determining the impacts of the action alternatives.

The no-action alternative is a description of current management conditions rather than a reiteration of existing planning documents for the National Riverways.

The 1984 general management plan, 1989 river use management plan, and 1992 statement for management all provide a basis for understanding the current management approach.

Under the no-action alternative, the National Park Service would continue to maintain the Big Spring tract's primitive, natural character to maintain its wilderness eligibility.

Alternative A

Under alternative A, management would focus on creating visitor experiences and providing resource conditions that help visitors better understand the riverways of the past, including traditional river recreation activities reminiscent of those that occurred when the National Riverways were established. Management would emphasize greater opportunities for traditional, nonmechanized forms of recreation and visitor experiences that are quieter, less crowded, and slower paced. Management would also focus on protecting natural resources and systems. Under this alternative, most of the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be recommended for wilderness designation.

Management would strive to provide more secluded visitor experiences and more awareness of, and opportunities for, historical cultural connections. Emphasis would be placed on restoring natural resources to more natural conditions and limiting development. Visitor services and facilities would be retained only to provide access for specific recreational activities and administrative activities. For example, roads and trails that have been illegally developed would be closed and rehabilitated with native vegetation. Some commercial services may be limited to achieve desired resource and visitor experience conditions.
This alternative would provide a comprehensive NPS Riverways-wide approach to resource and visitor use management. Specific management zones detailing acceptable resource conditions, visitor experience and use levels, and appropriate activities and development would be applied to National Riverways lands consistent with this concept.

Alternative B (NPS Preferred)

Under this alternative, management would enhance opportunities for visitors to discover and learn about the natural wonders and Ozark heritage of the National Riverways, while maintaining a mix of traditional recreational and commercial activities. Emphasis would be placed on increasing opportunities for visitor education and connections to natural resources and cultural landscapes.

This alternative would focus on providing a balance of diverse recreational opportunities and visitor experiences along with increasing visitor education and appreciation of natural and cultural resources of the park unit. For example, a mix of private and guided traditional recreational activities like boating, floating, and horseback riding would occur under this alternative. Additional trails and a small learning center at a rehabilitated Powder Mill would be developed to better orient and inform visitors. Natural resources would be restored to more natural conditions, while maintaining greater opportunities for visitor access than under alternative A. Most of the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be recommended for wilderness designation.

This alternative would provide a comprehensive NPS Riverways-wide approach to resource and visitor use management. Specific management zones detailing acceptable resource conditions, visitor experience and use levels, and appropriate activities and development would be applied to NPS Riverways lands consistent with this concept.

Alternative C

Under alternative C, management would primarily seek to provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences while maintaining the highly scenic natural setting and cultural resources. The National Riverways would be managed to support higher levels and diverse types of recreational opportunities, with a focus on more intensive management to ensure that excessive impacts on resources or public safety would not occur. In addition, land-based recreational opportunities would be increased.

Visitors would experience higher levels of social interaction with other visitors, especially during the peak season, which is defined as March 15 through Labor Day. Additional facilities such as campgrounds and trails would be developed to accommodate increased levels and different types of visitor use.

To support these recreational conditions, there would be a higher tolerance for resource impacts on more heavily used areas. Monitoring efforts would be emphasized to track natural resource conditions so unacceptable impacts from recreational activities did not occur. Interpretive and education programs would focus on expanding visitor connection with natural and cultural resources while improving their knowledge of low-impact recreational uses. The goal of such programs would be to encourage resource stewardship. Under this alternative, approximately half of the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be recommended for wilderness designation.

This alternative would provide a comprehensive NPS Riverways-wide approach to resource and visitor use management. Specific management zones detailing acceptable resource conditions, visitor experience and use levels, and appropriate activities and development would be applied to NPS Riverways lands consistent with this concept.

NEXT STEPS

After the distribution of the *Ozark National Scenic Riverways Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement,* there will be a 60-day public review and comment period. Afterward, the National Park Service planning team will evaluate comments from other federal agencies, tribes, organizations, businesses, and individuals regarding this draft plan. The National Park Service will then incorporate appropriate changes and prepare a final general management plan. The final plan will include letters from governmental agencies, any substantive comments on the draft document, and NPS responses to those comments.

Following distribution of the final general management plan and a 30-day no-action period, a record of decision approving a final plan will be prepared for signature by the NPS regional director. The record of decision documents the NPS selection of an alternative for implementation. The plan will then be implemented, depending on funding and staffing. A record of decision does not guarantee funds and staff for implementing the approved plan.

GUIDE TO THIS DOCUMENT

This *Ozark National Scenic Riverways Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Study / Environmental Impact Statement* is organized in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act, the NPS Director's Order 12: *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, and the NPS *General Management Planning Dynamic Sourcebook*.

Chapter 1: Introduction sets the framework for the document. It describes why the plan is being prepared and what needs it addresses based on the Ozark National Scenic Riverways' legislated mission, its purpose, the significance of its resources, special mandates and administrative commitments, servicewide mandates and policies, and other planning efforts in the area.

The chapter also details the planning opportunities and issues that were raised during public scoping meetings and initial planning team efforts. The alternatives developed and presented in the next chapter address these issues and concerns to varying degrees. This chapter concludes with a statement of the scope of the environmental impact analysis, including what impact topics were retained or dismissed from detailed analysis and why.

Chapter 2: Alternatives, Including the Preferred Alternative begins with an explanation of how the alternatives were formulated and how the preferred alternative was identified. A comparison of costs for implementing the alternatives is included. The four alternatives (including continuation of current management) are then presented. Mitigation measures to minimize or eliminate the impacts of some proposed actions are described just before the discussion of future studies and/or implementation plans that would be needed. The evaluation of the environmentally preferable alternative is followed by summary tables of the environmental consequences of implementing the alternative actions.

Chapter 3: Wilderness Study begins with an explanation of how the study was completed and a description and map of the study area. This section explains the wilderness eligibility process and how this relates to areas of the National Riverways. Public comments regarding wilderness designation are summarized in this chapter. A comparison of alternatives analyzed for the wilderness study is then presented. The wilderness proposal process is explained as well as how managing for wilderness may affect planning and management of services, resources, and uses of the wilderness area.

Chapter 4: Affected Environment describes those areas and resources that would be affected by implementing actions in the various alternatives. Included are natural resources, cultural resources, visitor use and experience, soundscapes, park operations, and the socioeconomic environment.

Chapter 5: Environmental Consequences analyzes the impacts of implementing the alternatives on topics described in "Chapter 4: Affected Environment." Methods that were used for assessing the impacts in terms of the locality, intensity, type, and duration of impacts are outlined at the beginning of the chapter.

Chapter 6: Consultation and Coordination describes the history of public and agency coordination during the planning effort and any future compliance requirements. It also lists agencies and organizations that will be receiving copies of the document, and NPS responses to comments received on the draft plan.

Chapter 7: Appendixes, References, Preparers and Consultants presents supporting information for the document.

Table 2. Ozark National Scenic Riverways Land-based Management Zones

	Developed	Resource-based recreation	Natural	Primitive
Zone concept	Areas support moderate to high levels of development and visitor services to accommodate concentrated visitor use and diverse recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities. Most of the administrative facilities for operations and maintenance would be in this zone.	Areas support moderate levels of visitor use to accommodate a wide range of recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities. Although some resource modifications could occur, natural and cultural resources would remain largely intact.	Areas support the broader ecological integrity of the national riverways. Natural processes would dominate and only low-impact recreational activities would be allowed. Visitors would be immersed in nature with opportunities to enjoy solitude and natural sights and sounds.	Areas retain their wild, natural character. Natural resources and processes would be preserved to maintain their pristine conditions and ecological integrity. Opportunities would be provided for visitors to experience backcountry challenges and solitude.
Levels of development	Moderate to high levels of development to meet visitor use and park administrative needs.	Moderate levels of development for the purpose of directing visitor use, enhancing recreational opportunities, and protecting resources.	Developments would be limited to those essential for resource protection, research, monitoring, and basic visitor services.	Minimal development would be allowed for the protection of natural resources and to allow for dispersed, low-impact visitor use.
Visitor experience	Visitors would have opportunities to better understand the riverways' significant resources and values through a wide range of interpretive facilities and services, interact with other visitors and park staff, and recreate in an environment that is supported by a variety of visitor services. Visitors would experience a modified natural environment with developed visitor facilities for orientation; day and overnight use would concentrate most of the park's visitors in these areas. They also would have a high expectation for quality services and facilities.	Visitors would have opportunities to participate in a range of recreational, interpretive, and educational opportunities. Visitors would experience a mostly natural setting where some visitor services are available.	Visitors would encounter intact natural resources, features, and systems for personal inspiration, education, and recreation. Experiences could include opportunities for solitude, contemplation, and self-reliance. Evidence of human use would be limited.	Visitors would be immersed in a primitive, wild setting with opportunities to experience backcountry challenges, solitude, and self-reliance. Visitors would have a sense of remoteness, isolated from the sights and sounds of other people.
Visitor services	Moderate to high level of visitor services could include one or more of the following: orientation and interpretive programs, signs, wayside exhibits, campgrounds, contact stations, commercial operations, convenience stores, dining, and shuttle services.	Moderate levels of visitor services would be provided, such as orientation and interpretive programs, signs and wayside exhibits, and commercial services if compatible with the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences.	Low levels of visitor services would be provided, such as informational signs and wayside exhibits.	Directional signs would be provided at trailheads. Limited interpretive materials might be available to promote safe and responsible recreation.
Natural resource condition	Natural resources would be managed to accommodate facilities for NPS operations and concentrated visitor use. The effects of developments and visitor use on the natural surroundings would be minimized through planning and design efforts.	Resources would be maintained in their natural condition, yet modified where necessary to provide distinct visitor opportunities and experiences. Modifications would be aesthetically blended with the environment as much as possible.	Ecological integrity would be maintained by preserving and restoring natural resources and processes through an integrated natural resource management approach. Emphasis would be placed on protecting and restoring outstanding natural features and habitats for rare and endangered species.	Natural systems and processes would function independent of human intervention. Natural conditions would be restored when disturbed by human activity, but only if degraded sites are not expected to recover in a timely manner without human intervention. No development would occur.
Cultural resource condition	Cultural resources eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places would be protected and managed consistent with NPS policies and the standards published by the secretary of the interior. All other cultural resources would be evaluated to determine if they should be preserved, stabilized, restored, or left unmaintained.	Same as Developed	Same as Developed	Same as Developed

TABLE 3. OZARK NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAYS RIVER-BASED MANAGEMENT ZONES (INCLUDES RIVERS UP TO THE ORDINARY HIGH-WATER MARK)

	Mixed-use	Seasonal mixed-use	Nonmotorized
Zone concept	The river supports a mix of motorized and nonmotorized boating opportunities. The natural setting would predominate, but the sights and sounds of human activity would be prevalent.	The river supports a mix of nonmotorized and lower-horsepower motorized boating during the off-peak season, which occurs from after Labor Day through March 14. The rest of the year, only nonmotorized boating would be allowed. The natural setting would predominate, but the social setting would vary seasonally with the types of allowable activities and levels of use.	The river supports year-round, nonmotorized boating opportunities. Visitors would experience an unaltered river system where natural sights and sounds would predominate, except during peak use when recreational activity would be more apparent.
Levels of development	Low to moderate levels of development would be provided to accommodate launching and retrieving motorized and nonmotorized watercraft on the river. Locating new developments or improvements in the floodplain would be avoided where possible.	Same as Mixed-Use	Low levels of development could be provided to accommodate launching and retrieving only nonmotorized watercraft on the river. Locating new development or improvements in the floodplain would be avoided.
Visitor experience	Visitors would have opportunities to engage in a diverse mix of motorized and nonmotorized boating experiences.	Visitors would have the opportunity to float the river without the presence of motorized boats during the peak season, which is defined as March 15 through Labor Day. During the off-season, visitors would have opportunities to engage in a mix of lower-horsepower motorized and nonmotorized boating experiences.	Visitors would have the opportunity to float the river without the presence of motorized boats year-round.
Natural resource condition	The natural resource conditions in the river corridor would be managed to ensure that the free-flowing clear, clean water of the river was not degraded.	Same as Mixed-Use	Same as Mixed-Use
Cultural resource condition	Cultural resources eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places would be protected and managed consistent with NPS policies and the standards published by the secretary of the interior. All other cultural resources would be evaluated to determine if they should be preserved, stabilized, restored, or left unmaintained. Cultural resources that are subject to bank erosion, slumping, subsidence, or other natural deterioration would be stabilized using best management practices.	Same as Mixed-Use	Same as Mixed-Use

TABLE 4. MOTORBOAT HORSEPOWER (HP) LIMITS BY ALTERNATIVE

		No-action alternative		Alternative A		Alternative B (NPS preferred)		Alternative C	
		Peak season	Off-peak season	Peak season	Off-peak season	Peak season	Off-peak season	Peak season	Off-peak season
Current River	Northern boundary to Akers	10 hp	25 hp	No motorboats		No motorboats		No motorboats	
	Akers to Pulltite	25 hp	25 hp					No motorboats	25 hp
	Pulltite to Round Spring					No motorboats	25 hp		
	Round Spring to Two Rivers	60/40 hp		No motorboats	25 hp	60/40 hp		60/40 hp	
	Two Rivers to Van Buren			40 hp					
	Van Buren to Big Spring							No hp limits	
	Big Spring to southern boundary	No hp limits							
Jacks Fork	Western boundary to Rymers	10 hp	25 hp	No motorboats		No motorboats		No motorboats	
	Rymers to Bay Creek							No motorboats	25 hp
	Bay Creek to Alley Spring	25 hp				No motorboats	25 hp	25 hp	
	Alley Spring to West Eminence	60/40 hp							
	East Eminence to Two Rivers	60/40 hp				60/40 hp		60/40 hp	

General notes:
Peak season is defined as March 15 through Labor Day.
The designation of 60/40 assumes a regulation change. The color codes correspond to the river-based management zones described in table 3:

Mixed-use	Seasonal mixed-use	Nonmotorized

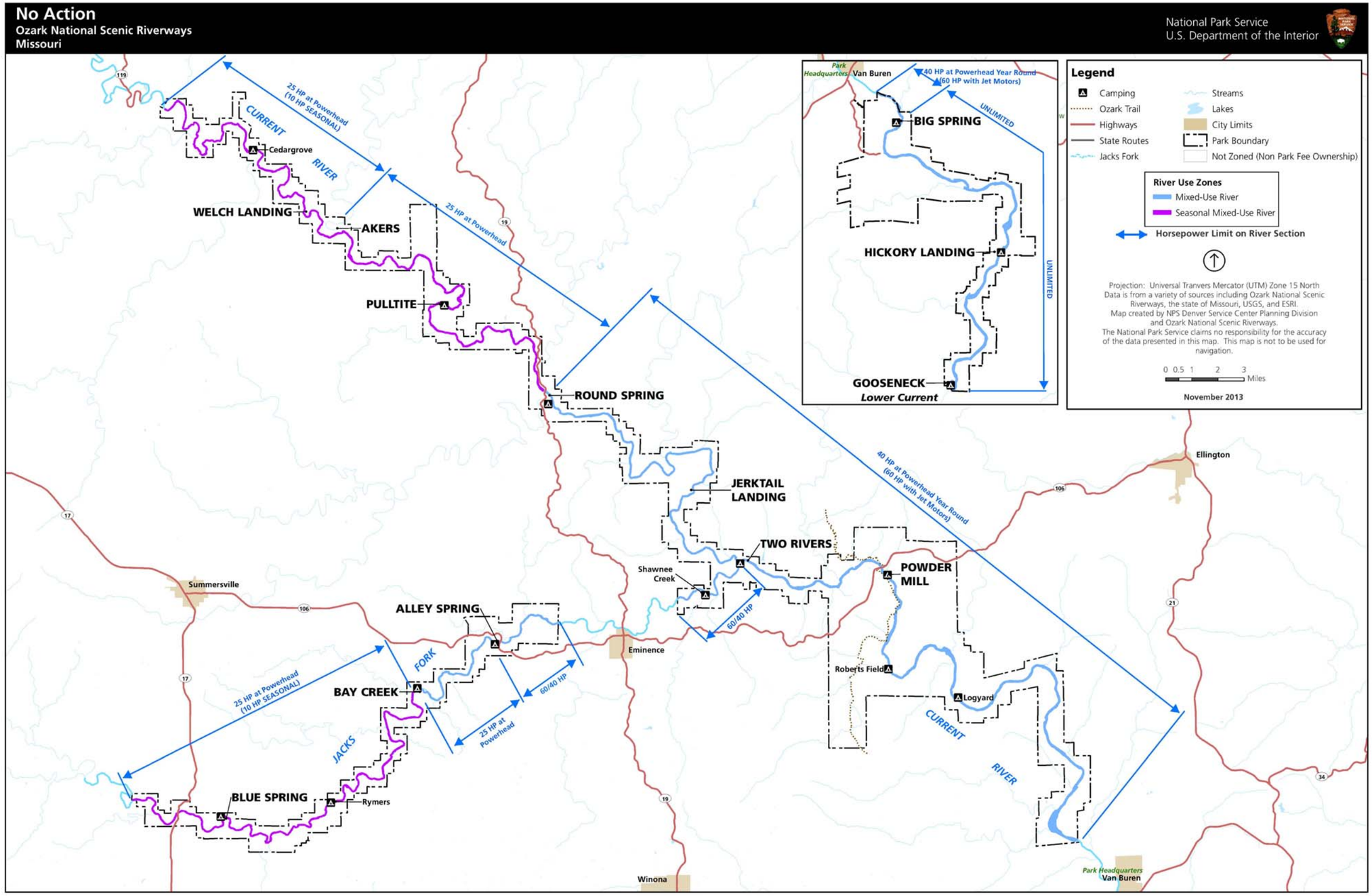
Table 5. Recreation Activities by Management Zone

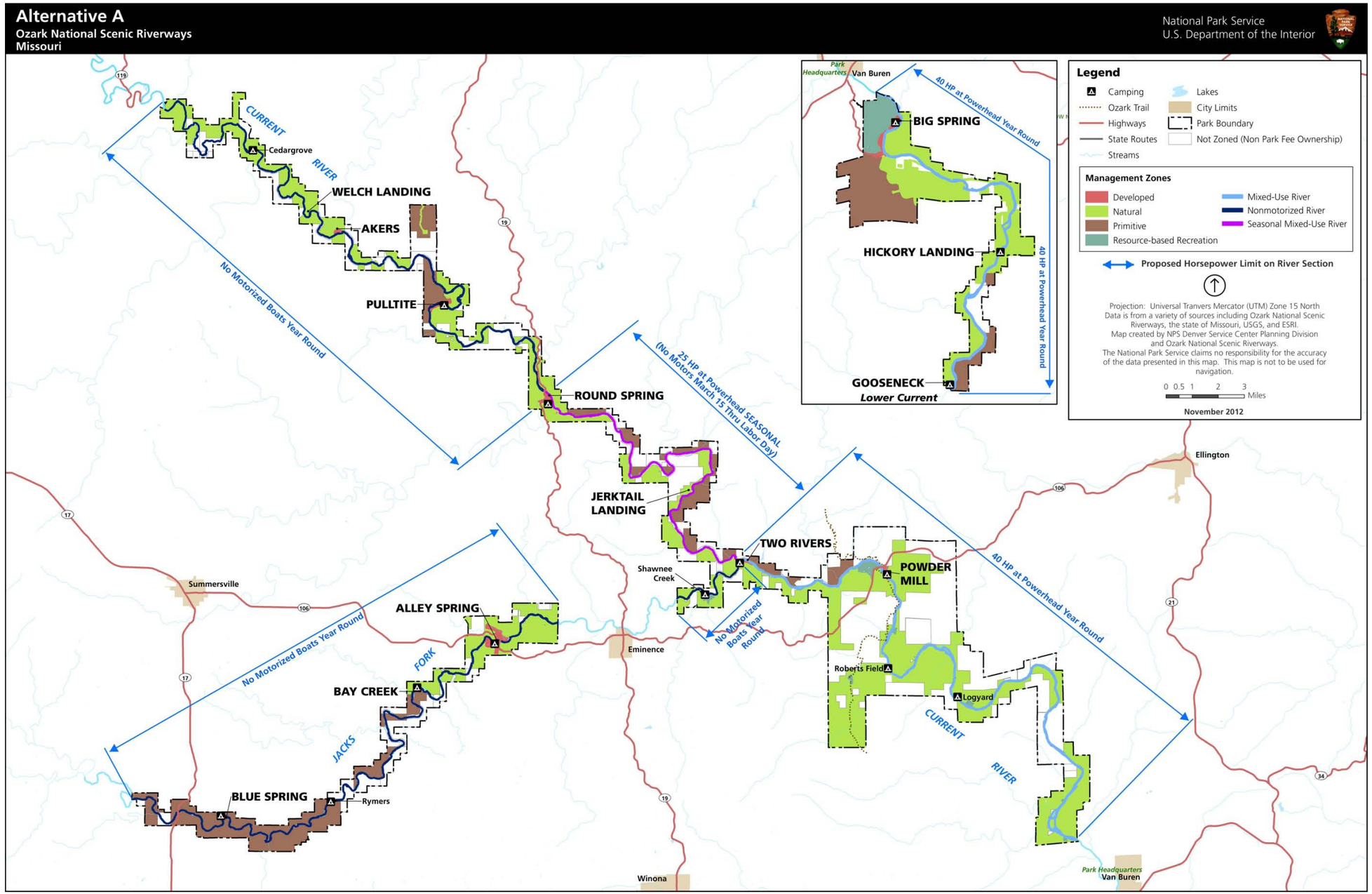
Activity	Land-based management zones				River-based management zones		
	Developed	Resource-based recreation	Natural	Primitive	Mixed-use river	Seasonal mixed-use river	Nonmotorized river
Picnicking	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Camping, amenities provided	•	•					
Camping, no amenities			•	•			
Camping on gravel bars[1]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lodging/dining	•						
Hiking	•	•	•	•			
Horseback riding		On designated trails			At designated fords		
Bicycling on roads	•	•	•				
Bicycling on trails	•	•	•				
Scenic viewing / nature observation	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Interpretive talks, demonstrations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hunting and trapping		•	•	•	•	•	•
Fishing (not in springs)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Caving	Guided	Guided	Guided	Guided			
All terrain vehicle[2]	•						
Swimming[3]					•	•	•
Canoeing, kayaking, rafting, tubing					•	•	•
Motorized boating					Motorboats year-round. See table 4 for motorboat horsepower limits by alternative.	Peak season: No motorboats. Off-peak season 25 horsepower maximum.	No motorboats.

1 Camping on gravel bars accessed by vehicles would only be allowed in designated campsites.

2 All-terrain vehicle and utility terrain vehicles would only be allowed on designated county roads, in accordance with state law.

3 Swimming is not allowed in springs or spring branches.


No Action
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Missouri
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Legend
Camping
Ozark Trail
Highways
State Routes
Jacks Fork
Streams
Lakes
City Limits
Park Boundary
Not Zoned (Non Park Fee Ownership)
River Use Zones
Mixed-Use River
Seasonal Mixed-Use River
Horsepower Limit on River Section
Projection: Universal Tranvers Mercator (UTM) Zone 15 North
Data is from a variety of sources including Ozark National Scenic Riverways, the state of Missouri, USGS, and ESRI.
Map created by NPS Denver Service Center Planning Division and Ozark National Scenic Riverways.
The National Park Service claims no responsibility for the accuracy of the data presented in this map. This map is not to be used for navigation.
0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles
November 2013
Park Headquarters
Van Buren
40 HP at Powerhead Year Round (60 HP with Jet Motors)
UNLIMITED
BIG SPRING
HICKORY LANDING
GOOSENECK
Lower Current
25 HP at Powerhead (10 HP SEASONAL)
CURRENT
RIVER
Cedargrove
WELCH LANDING
AKERS
25 HP at Powerhead
PULLTITE
ROUND SPRING
JERKTAIL LANDING
TWO RIVERS
Shawnee Creek
60/40 HP
POWDER MILL
Ellington
Summersville
ALLEY SPRING
FORK
Eminence
Roberts Field
Logyard
BAY CREEK
JACKS
BLUE SPRING
Rymers
Winona


Alternative A
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Missouri
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Legend
Camping
Ozark Trail
Highways
State Routes
Streams
Lakes
City Limits
Park Boundary
Not Zoned (Non Park Fee Ownership)
Management Zones
Developed
Natural
Primitive
Resource-based Recreation
Mixed-Use River
Nonmotorized River
Seasonal Mixed-Use River
Proposed Horsepower Limit on River Section
Projection: Universal Tranvers Mercator (UTM) Zone 15 North
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HICKORY LANDING
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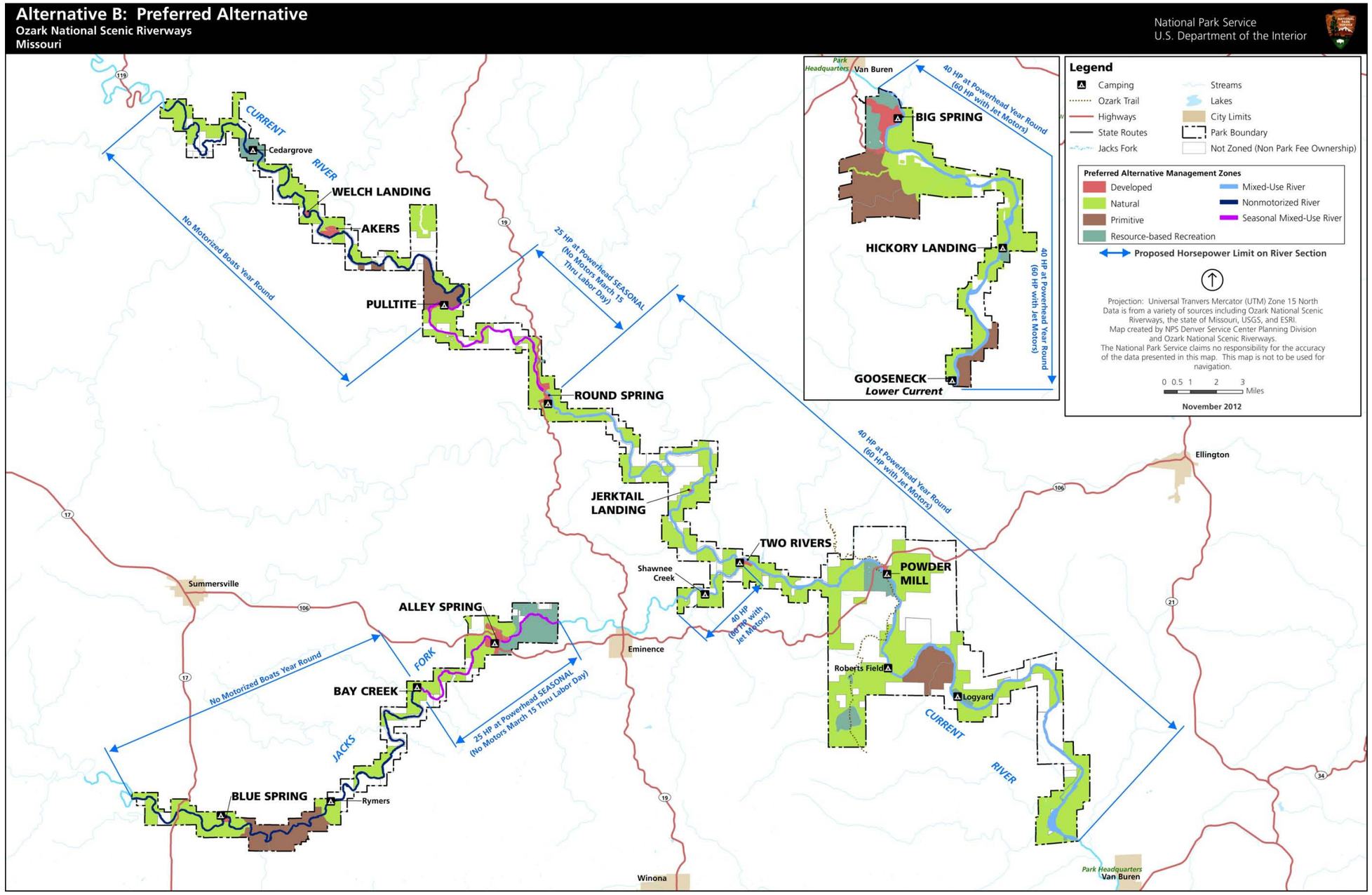
Lower Current
40 HP at Powerhead Year Round
CURRENT
RIVER
Cedargrove
WELCH LANDING
AKERS
PULLTITE
ROUND SPRING
JERKTAIL LANDING
TWO RIVERS
POWDER MILL
Shawnee Creek
ALLEY SPRING
BAY CREEK
BLUE SPRING
Rymers
JACKS
FORK
No Motorized Boats Year Round
25 HP at Powerhead SEASONAL (No Motors March 15 Thru Labor Day)
Summersville
Eminence
Winona
Ellington
Roberts Field
Logyard


Alternative B: Preferred Alternative
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Missouri
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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Ozark Trail
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State Routes
Jacks Fork
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0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles
November 2012
CURRENT RIVER
Cedargrove
WELCH LANDING
AKERS
PULLTITE
ROUND SPRING
JERKTAIL LANDING
TWO RIVERS
POWDER MILL
Shawnee Creek
ALLEY SPRING
BAY CREEK
JACKS FORK
BLUE SPRING
Rymers
Summersville
Eminence
Winona
Ellington
Roberts Field
Logyard
Park Headquarters
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BIG SPRING
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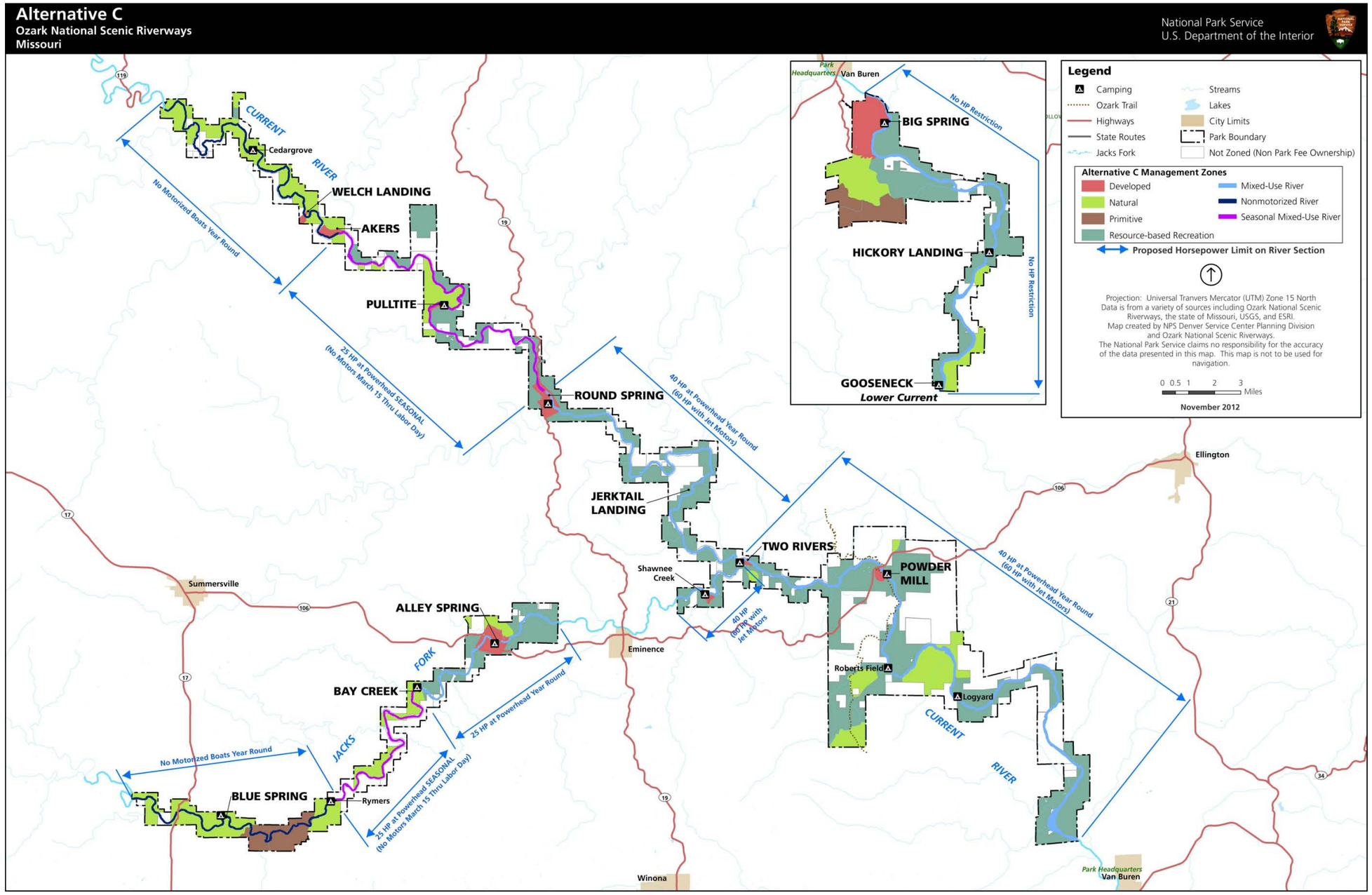
No Motorized Boats Year Round
25 HP at Powerhead SEASONAL (No Motors March 15 Thru Labor Day)
40 HP at Powerhead Year Round (60 HP with Jet Motors)
40 HP (60 HP with Jet Motors)


Alternative C
Ozark National Scenic Riverways
Missouri
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CURRENT RIVER
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Lower Current
No Motorized Boats Year Round
25 HP at Powerhead SEASONAL (No Motors March 15 Thru Labor Day)
40 HP at Powerhead Year Round (60 HP with Jet Motors)
25 HP at Powerhead Year Round
40 HP (60 HP with Jet Motors
No HP Restriction

TABLE 13. SUMMARY OF KEY DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ALTERNATIVES

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Concept	The no-action alternative describes how Ozark National Scenic Riverways has been and continues to be managed. It reflects current resource conditions and trends, existing recreational opportunities, types of development, and levels of service. The primary purpose of describing the no-action alternative is to provide a baseline for comparing the other management alternatives.	Management would focus on creating visitor experiences and providing resource conditions that help visitors better understand the riverways of the past, including the traditional river recreation activities reminiscent of those that occurred when the National Riverways was established. Management would emphasize greater opportunities for traditional, nonmechanized forms of recreation and visitor experiences that are quieter, less crowded, and slower paced.	Management would provide a high level of protection of natural and cultural resources, while expanding ways for visitors to experience and learn about these resources in interesting and enjoyable ways. Management would strive to improve visitors' connection to the natural, cultural, and scenic elements of the National Riverways with the major goal of helping improve visitor appreciation of its resources. Management would enhance visitor opportunities to discover and learn about the National Riverways' natural wonders and Ozark heritage.	Management would primarily seek to provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences while maintaining the highly scenic natural setting and cultural resources. Management would provide a diversity of river recreational opportunities and experiences similar to that provided in the no-action alternative. In addition, management would offer land-based recreational opportunities. This is reflected in the increased amount of acreage for the resource-based recreation zone and the developed zone.
Zoning	The no-action alternative does not include management zones, but would continue to use river use management zones set forth in the 1989 river use management plan.	Land-based zone: • developed: 1.4% • resource-based recreation: 3.2% • natural: 68.6% • primitive: 26.8% River-based Zone: • mixed-use river: 36% • seasonal mixed-use river: 13% • nonmotorized river: 51%	Land-based zone: • developed: 2.8% • resource-based recreation: 8.8% • natural: 72% • primitive: 16.4% River-based zone: • mixed-use river: 52% • seasonal mixed-use river: 14% • nonmotorized river: 34%	Land-based zone: • developed: 5.7% • resource-based recreation: 59.6% • natural: 28.2% • primitive: 6.5% River-based zone: • mixed-use river: 59% • seasonal mixed-use river: 20% • nonmotorized river: 21%
Visitor experiences and activities	The current wide variety of visitor experiences and recreational activities would continue to occur. River-based recreational opportunities would continue to include canoeing, kayaking, tubing, rafting, johnboating, and fishing. Different stretches of the river would continue to be managed for different boating experiences. The current variety of land-based recreational opportunities would also continue to be offered, including hiking, horseback riding, hunting, picnicking, camping, and caving.	Visitors would have opportunities to float secluded stretches of the river where they would not experience the sights and sounds of motorized boats or vehicles. Along other stretches of the river, visitors would encounter low to moderate densities of lower-horsepower motorboats that evoke the traditional johnboat river experience. Traditional, family-oriented recreation would also be emphasized, including activities such as guided float trips, gravel bar camping, and fishing. Motorized forms of recreation would be deemphasized.	A manageable mix of traditional recreational activities, such as floating, boating, and horseback riding, would still be provided. Also, a variety of guided and self-guided activities would be offered to help visitors discover the array of natural and cultural resource-based opportunities available and increase visitor awareness of the NPS Riverways' many special resources and values.	Visitors would have opportunities to experience a diverse range of motorized and nonmotorized recreational activities in a variety of outdoor settings. Visitors would encounter more intensive management to ensure that greater levels and types of visitor use do not cause excessive impacts on National Riverways resources or diminish public safety. Visitors would experience higher levels of social interaction, especially during the peak season. Opportunities for community and family gatherings would be emphasized.
Nonmotorized watercraft	All sections of the riverways would continue to be open to nonmotorized watercraft year-round. Management would continue to provide for visitor opportunities and experiences that result in high-density canoe use in the upper Current River. The frequency of river access points along this stretch would continue to allow for float trips of one day or less.	All sections of the riverways would continue to be open to nonmotorized watercraft year-round. The percentage of the rivers zoned for nonmotorized recreation would increase, including specific areas for low-density nonmotorized use, even during the peak-use season. Concession dropoff and pickup locations for visitors using nonmotorized watercraft would be redistributed to reduce peak-season crowding effects.		All sections of the riverways would continue to be open to nonmotorized watercraft year-round. Concession dropoff and pickup locations for visitors using nonmotorized watercraft would be redistributed to reduce peak-season crowding effects.
Code of Federal Regulations *motorboat horsepower limits*	Management would continue to allow boats to use 60/40 horsepower motors on certain portions of the Current and Jacks Fork rivers. It is recognized that continuation of this approach is in violation with the existing regulation. The no-action alternative is characterized this way to provide a baseline for comparison in evaluating the changes and impacts of the other alternatives. The 1989 river use management zones that set horsepower limits on motorboats and maximum numbers for canoes within the National Riverways would continue. See table 4 for motorboat horsepower limits by alternative.	Existing regulation that prohibits the use of motors that are rated higher than 40 horsepower by the manufacturer on certain portions of the Current and Jacks Fork rivers would be enforced. Enforcement of this regulation would prohibit 60/40 horsepower motors. See table 4 for motorboat horsepower limits by alternative.	The National Park Service would pursue a rule-making to change the existing regulation to allow 60/40 horsepower motors on certain portions of the Current and Jacks Fork rivers. See table 4 for motorboat horsepower limits by alternative.	
Motorboat horsepower limits	See table 4 for motorboat horsepower limits by alternative.			

Table 13. Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives (continued)

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Concession floating	Concessioners would continue to be required to limit nonmotorized watercraft rentals to adhere to the 1989 river management plan.	Concession dropoff and pickup locations for visitors using nonmotorized watercraft would be redistributed to reduce peak-season crowding effects. This would require closure and restoration of about 20 access points. Some new access may be needed; however, total designated access points would decrease.	Concession dropoff and pickup locations for visitors using nonmotorized watercraft would be redistributed to reduce peak-season crowding effects. This would require closure and restoration of about 20 access points and the careful design and opening of about 20 new designated access points. Total designated access points would remain constant or decrease.	
Fishing/ gigging	The NPS Riverways would continue to be available for fishing and gigging activities, consistent with applicable restrictions set forth by the park unit or state. For example, fishing from motorized boats would be allowable in areas zoned by the park unit for motorized boating. The National Park Service would continue to partner with the state to enhance healthy, native game fish populations.			
Hiking trails	Designated trails totaling 49 miles and ranging in length from less than a mile to over 13 miles would continue to be provided.	The location of primitive and natural zoning would increase the amount of hiking trails compared to the no-action alternative. About 15 miles of roads in primitive zones would be removed and replaced with hiking trails.	The location of primitive and natural zoning would increase the amount of hiking trail access compared to the no-action alternative. About 10 miles of roads in primitive zones would be removed and replaced with hiking trails. When needed, trails would be developed to access some discovery sites. Some of these trails may link to the Ozark Trail.	Additional walking and hiking trails would be opened over time. And about 5 miles of roads in primitive zones would be removed and replaced with hiking trails.
Accessible trails	Some developed area paved trails would continue to be accessible and two campgrounds would continue to provide accessible campsites.	One additional mile of accessible trails would be opened.		
Mountain bike trails	All trails would continue to be off limits to mountain bikes.	Mountain biking may become an allowable trail use, but only on designated trails. Mountain biking would not be allowed in primitive zones.		
Horse riding and camping	The current horse trail system of 23 miles of designated horse trails would continue to be provided, with seven designated stream crossings for horse riders. At least 90 miles of undesignated horse trails, with 24 undesignated stream crossings used by horse riders and 38 undesignated access points would continue to be unmanaged. Horse camping would continue to not be allowed.	A recreational horse use and trail management plan would be prepared. Approximately 25 miles of additional, designated horse trails would be provided, but no new stream crossings. Approximately 65 miles of undesignated horse trails would be closed and restored. Design of the existing, approximately 23-mile-long horse trail system would be improved to discourage creation of social trails; decrease the impact of horses on sensitive areas, including streams and riparian areas; reduce conflicts with other users; and reduce trail damage, erosion, and manure pollution. A permitting system would be established, as necessary, to manage impacts of horse use. Horse camping would not be allowed.	A recreational horse use and trail management plan would be prepared. Approximately 35 miles of additional, designated horse trails would be provided, including some new stream crossings. Approximately 25-campsite horse campground may be established. Approximately 65 miles of undesignated horse trails would be closed and restored. Design of the existing, approximately 23-mile-long horse trail system would be improved to discourage creation of social trails; decrease the impact of horses on sensitive areas, including streams and riparian areas; reduce conflicts with other users; and reduce trail damage, erosion, and manure pollution. A permitting system would be established, as necessary, to manage impacts of horse use. Horse camping may be allowed in designated sites.	A recreational horse use and trail management plan would be prepared. Approximately 45 miles of additional designated horse trails would be provided to allow for longer distance riding, including some new stream crossings. Approximately 25 campsite horse campground along the Jacks Fork may be established. Approximately 65 miles of undesignated horse trails would be closed and restored. Design of the existing, approximately 23-mile-long horse trail system would be improved to discourage creation of social trails; decrease the impact of horses on sensitive areas, including streams and riparian areas; reduce conflicts with other users; and reduce trail damage, erosion, and manure pollution. A permitting system would be established, as necessary, to manage impacts of horse use.
Developed camping	Six developed fee campgrounds with recreational vehicle hookups at Big Spring, Powder Mill, Two Rivers, Alley Spring, Round Spring, and Pulltite would continue to provide a total of 450 sites.		Two additional developed campgrounds may be provided at existing day use areas: Upper Current River (Akers) and Upper Jacks Fork (Blue Spring).	
Gravel bar access	Vehicular access to gravel bars for day use and overnight camping would continue to be allowed.	Vehicular access to all gravel bars would be eliminated. Gravel bar access would be by boat or walk-in only.	The number of gravel bars accessible to vehicles would be designated and reduced.	Vehicular access to designated sites on gravel bars for day use and overnight camping would continue to be allowed.
Gravel bar camping	Campers would continue to be allowed to locate their own campsites on gravel bars.	Camping on gravel bars accessed by vehicles would be allowed in designated campsites only.		
Backcountry camping	Backcountry campsites would continue to be provided throughout the NPS Riverways and would require a fee. Backcountry sites may have some basic amenities (restrooms, tables, fire rings, and/or lantern posts).	Backcountry campsites would continue to be provided in designated areas throughout the NPS Riverways and would require a fee. Backcountry campsites would be removed from primitive zones. Backcountry sites may have some basic amenities (restrooms, tables, fire rings, and/or lantern posts).		Backcountry campsites would continue to be provided in designated areas throughout the NPS Riverways and would require a fee. The total number of backcountry campsites may be increased, but backcountry campsites would be removed from the primitive zones. Backcountry sites may have some basic amenities (restrooms, tables, fire rings, and/or lantern posts).
Primitive camping	Primitive campsites would continue to be provided throughout the NPS Riverways and would not require a fee. Primitive sites would have no amenities. Some primitive sites are accessible by vehicles.	Primitive campsites would continue to be provided in primitive and natural zones and would not require a fee. Primitive campsites would have no amenities. Roads to primitive campsites would be removed.	Primitive campsites would continue to be provided in primitive and natural zones and would not require a fee. Primitive campsites would have no amenities. Some roads to primitive campsites would be closed.	Primitive campsites would continue to be provided in primitive and natural zones and would not require a fee. The total number of primitive campsites may be increased, but roads to primitive campsites would be removed. Primitive campsites would have no amenities.
Caving	Guided cave tours at Round Spring would continue to be provided.			

Table 13. Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives (continued)

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Visitor services & facilities	Visitor orientation and information services would continue to be available at NPS headquarters in Van Buren, at the multiagency visitor center in Salem, and at a few contact points and ranger stations throughout the National Riverways. Major recreation sites would continue to be found at Akers, Pulltite, Round Spring, Alley Spring, Two Rivers, Powder Mill, and Big Spring. These areas would include visitor facilities for day use and overnight camping. Existing visitor services would also continue, which include equipment rentals, restrooms, and in some cases concession stores and food services. Rental cabins would also continue to be available at Big Spring. Smaller recreation sites with facilities for day and overnight use would continue to include Cedargrove, Jerktail, Blue Spring, Log Yard, and Gooseneck. River access, primitive camping, restrooms, and parking would continue to be provided at various sites along the rivers. There are approximately 350 miles of roads in the National Riverways—50 miles are paved, 120 miles are graded, and 150 miles are two-track dirt roads. There are 72 miles of trails designated for hiking and/or horseback riding. Different segments of the road and trail networks would continue to be managed by the National Park Service or state or county agencies.	Only a network of designated roads, trails, and river crossings would be retained to provide access for specific recreational activities and administrative purposes. Management would close roads and trails that have been illegally developed. Native vegetation impacted by these unauthorized routes may be rehabilitated. Commercial services may be limited or modified along different portions of the rivers to achieve desired visitor experiences and resource conditions.	Additional trails (some with universal accessibility) would be developed for visitors to access a network of "discovery sites." A small learning center at Powder Mill, with educational and interpretive programs and exhibits, would be developed to better orient and inform visitors. This facility may include classrooms and may provide some limited quarters for visiting experts.	Additional facilities would be necessary to accommodate higher levels and different types of visitor use. There would be more types of designated camping opportunities, including primitive, semiprimitive, semideveloped, and developed sites. There would also be more boat ramps and trails for hiking and horseback riding.
Visitor entry & information	The following visitor entry services and information would continue: • No entrance station or entrance fees • No traditional NPS year-round visitor center • Website and printed materials • 1 year-round visitor contact in park HQ lobby • 5 seasonal visitor contact locations • 1 off-site, multiagency information facility in Salem, MO			
Additional contact locations	No additional contact locations would be provided.		One additional visitor contact location may be provided as part of the learning center at Powder Mill.	The sizes of current visitor contact locations at some sites may be expanded based on demand. One or two additional visitor contact locations may be provided.
NPS roads and river access points	NPS roads and river access points that are currently open and accessible would continue to be managed and patrolled.	NPS roads and river access points would be managed by zoning prescriptions. The National Park Service would seek to establish a partnership with the counties regarding road management, including closures. Law enforcement would be increased for compliance.	NPS roads and river access points would be managed by zoning prescriptions. The National Park Service would seek to establish a partnership with the counties regarding road management, including closures. For some discovery sites, old access roads would be reopened to provide vehicular access. Law enforcement would be increased for compliance.	NPS roads and river access points would be managed by zoning prescriptions. The National Park Service would seek to establish a partnership with the counties regarding road management, including closures. Law enforcement would be increased for compliance.
Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points	The National Park Service would continue to strive for closure of NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points that are not part of the NPS designated system.	Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. Natural conditions would be restored to approximately 50 miles of roads. Law enforcement for compliance would be increased.	Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. Natural conditions would be restored to approximately 45 miles of roads. Law enforcement for compliance would be increased.	Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. Natural conditions would be restored to approximately 40 miles of roads. Law enforcement for compliance would be increased.
Concessions	There are currently 23 concession contracts that provide services to visitors. These businesses would continue to operate under their existing contracts to provide visitor support and river recreational services (canoe, tube, and raft rentals and shuttle services), cabin rentals and a restaurant at Big Spring, and five camp stores near the campgrounds.	There would be potential opportunities for new concessions for overnight river activities such as guided float trips and guided (hike-in) backcountry trips in the natural and primitive zones. New concessions would require a feasibility study.	There would be potential opportunities for new concessions for shuttle services for visitors using nonmotorized watercraft and overnight river activities such as guided float trips and guided (hike-in) backcountry trips in the natural and primitive zones. New concessions would require a feasibility study. New campgrounds and higher concentrations of visitors in developed zones may create the need for an additional camp store.	

Table 13. Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives (continued)

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Interpretation and education	A variety of interpretive and educational programs would continue to be provided for visitors. The goal of these programs is to ensure that visitors have all the information needed to fully enjoy and experience the National Riverways through (1) promoting individual awareness about the facilities, features, and activities available to them, (2) interpreting the cultural and natural features of the area, and (3) educating visitors on the safe and proper use of National Riverways resources.	Interpretation and education would strive to enhance visitor awareness of the continuum of people's cultural connections to the area that spans thousands of years. Living history programs would be emphasized to provide visitors with a better understanding of traditional, subsistence ways of life in the Ozarks. For example, an interpretive "float camp" would be developed to let visitors experience what river recreation was like in the past.	Self-guided interpretive opportunities would provide visitors with a sense of being the first to discover remote, hard-to-find places, such as an old cabin or a secluded spring. Guided opportunities would include ranger-led tours of special features, such as old settlements, springs, and river environments. This would help reach visitors who are looking for different or additional activities to the traditional float trip. Resource management staff would develop opportunities for visitors and volunteers to engage in hands-on resource management projects. Learning center programs could provide more structured environmental education opportunities, especially for school groups. A learning center would be established at Powder Mill and a school curriculum would be developed. Learning center programs could provide more structured environmental education opportunities, especially for school groups.	Interpretive and educational opportunities would expand for visitors to connect with the natural and cultural resources while improving their outdoor recreation skills. The goal of such programs would be to encourage resource stewardship and low-impact recreational uses. Example activities could include boating safety, safe hunting and fishing practices, and traditional Ozark lifeway skills. An Ozark Highlands Folkways Institute would be established and a Living History farm would be developed.
Natural resource management	Natural resource management would continue to preserve and protect the natural resources, processes, systems, and values of the National Riverways in accordance with NPS policies. In particular, programs would emphasize protection of outstanding natural features, including sites that encompass geological, scientific, and ecological characteristics that warrant special protection. Examples include caves, springs, and other rare habitats that support threatened and endangered species. Ongoing programs also would include the administration of scenic easements on privately owned tracts, collaborative management efforts on state-owned lands, and management of agricultural leases to preserve certain pastoral landscapes within the National Riverways' boundary.	Natural resources would be maintained or restored to more natural conditions that lack signs of substantial development or use. The emphasis would be on restoring degraded biological communities and improving the overall natural setting. Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. Natural conditions would be restored to approximately 50 miles of roads. The National Park Service would seek to partner with the county and state to replace Cedar Grove low-water bridge with a high-water bridge. The National Park Service would seek to partner with communities about waste systems to improve water quality.	Natural resources would be maintained or restored to more natural conditions that lack signs of substantial development or use. Restoring degraded biological communities and improving the overall natural setting would be emphasized. A focused program of resource monitoring, research, and preservation projects would actively support and strengthen management capabilities and ensure accurate visitor information. Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. Effects of visitor use on river/karst habitats would be investigated. The National Park Service would seek to partner with the county and state to replace Cedar Grove low-water bridge with a high-water bridge. The National Park Service would seek to partner with communities about waste systems to improve water quality.	Natural resources would be managed to provide high-quality scenery. There would be a higher tolerance for resource impacts in more heavily used areas. Impacted environments would be stabilized or restored to retain the natural settings. Monitoring efforts would be emphasized to track natural resource conditions so that unacceptable impacts from recreational activities do not occur. Undesignated NPS roads, traces, crossings, and river access points would be closed. The National Park Service would seek to partner with the county and state to replace Cedar Grove low-water bridge with a high-water bridge. The National Park Service would seek to partner with communities about waste systems to improve water quality.
Cultural resource management	Cultural resource management would continue to include efforts to preserve historic structures, archeological resources, and cultural landscapes in accordance with NPS policies. Cultural resource programs would also include adaptive reuse of some historic structures; management of some historic cemeteries (that is, provide appropriate access); the study of Ozark folklife; and the preservation and cataloging of historic objects, documents, and other collections.	The protection and preservation of archeological resources, historic structures, and cultural landscapes, including the restoration of selected open fields to preserve pastoral scenes, would be emphasized. Management would seek to partner with volunteers and others to accomplish cultural resource stewardship projects.	Management actions would protect and preserve archeological resources, historic structures, and cultural landscapes. Selected structures and sites may receive special management attention to support Ozark heritage educational programs. A focused program of resource monitoring, research, and preservation projects would actively support and strengthen management capabilities and ensure accurate visitor information. An oral history program would be restarted. The archive/collections program would be enhanced. Efforts to coordinate cultural resource education, interpretation, and protection activities across management divisions would be enhanced. Management would ensure that cultural resource information is accurately conveyed to the public. Partnerships with volunteers and others would be sought to accomplish cultural resource stewardship projects.	Management actions would protect and preserve archeological resources, historic structures, and cultural landscapes. Opportunities would be expanded for visitors to access and experience historic structures and cultural landscapes throughout the National Riverways. To accommodate more visitors, some historic structures and sites may require more intensive management actions to protect resource integrity. Efforts to track cultural resource conditions would be emphasized so that unacceptable conditions do not occur.

Table 13. Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives (continued)

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Historic structures	The 249 structures on the List of Classified Structures would continue to be stabilized and maintained; many of these are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Some of these structures have been restored and are available as interpretive exhibits. Others would continue to be adaptively used for other park operations and maintenance uses.	Additional historic structures would be restored and made available to the public as interpretive exhibits. These additional structures and associated landscapes would complete the historic representation of the continuum of Ozark cultural history in this region.		
Cemeteries	Cemeteries would continue to be maintained.	Five additional cemeteries would be restored.		
Archeological sites	The NPS Riverways' more than 400 known archeological sites would continue to be monitored.	The NPS Riverways' more than 400 known archeological sites would continue to be monitored. Appropriate protection measures, such as riverbank stabilization or trail rerouting would be taken where archeological sites are threatened by erosion, visitor use, or other impacts.		
Cultural landscapes	A cultural affiliation landscape plan for pastoral areas would be completed and implemented. This would increase areas managed as meadows and agricultural sites that were once part of Ozark farms and settlement areas.	A cultural affiliation landscape plan for pastoral areas would be completed and implemented according to the management zones. This would increase areas managed as meadows and agricultural sites that were once part of Ozark farms and settlement areas.		
Curatorial facility	The National Riverways' certified curatorial facility would continue to be managed for park resource collections only.		The National Riverways' curatorial facility would be expanded to provide additional archeological storage space for smaller national park units in the region. The National Riverways would become a regional curatorial hub.	The National Riverways' certified curatorial facility would continue to be managed for park resource collections only.
Wilderness	The National Park Service would continue to maintain the Big Spring tract's primitive, natural character to maintain its wilderness eligibility. See chapter 3 for details about the wilderness study and proposed zoning, management of structures, roads, and utilities within the Big Spring tract.	Under this alternative, 3,424 out of 3,434 acres within the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be recommended for wilderness designation. This amount is 99% of the total wilderness study area. Ten acres would be excluded as a small developed area and its narrow access corridor from the proposed wilderness designation to allow for continued administrative use of the access roads, barn, NPS training range, and utility corridor. Most of the wilderness study area would be zoned primitive with the exception of the access road, barn, NPS training range, and utility corridor. These areas would be zoned natural. The fire tower, incinerator, barn, NPS training range, and Civilian Conservation Corps-era camp would be retained. The barn and NPS training range would be excluded (approximately 6 acres) from the recommended wilderness designation and would continue to be maintained for administrative use. Motorized vehicle use of the access road to the fire tower would be prohibited. This road may be restored to a Civilian Conservation Corps-era condition. The access road to the barn and NPS training range would be excluded from the proposed wilderness designation and maintained for administrative access. The buried utility communication cable that serves the Big Spring cabins and residents located further down the line would be excluded from the proposed wilderness designation (approximately 4 acres) and maintained.	Under this alternative, 3,430 out of 3,434 acres within the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be recommended for wilderness designation. The entire Big Spring Wilderness Study Area would be zoned primitive. The fire tower, incinerator, barn, and Civilian Conservation-era camp would be retained. The NPS training range would be removed and the area restored. Motorized vehicle use of the access roads to the fire tower, NPS training range, and barn would be prohibited. The roads would be evaluated to determine the feasibility of restoring them to a Civilian Conservation Corps-era condition. The buried utility communication cable that serves the Big Spring cabins and residents located further down the line would be proposed as potential wilderness addition and would remain in use until it failed, or until another utility route outside the wilderness was designated. Once decommissioned, it would be evaluated to determine the feasibility of restoring the area. Once the nonconforming use was extinguished, the utility corridor would be administratively converted to wilderness.	Under this alternative, 1,779 acres of the Big Spring Wilderness Study Area, consisting of the area south of Chilton Creek, would be recommended for wilderness designation. This amount is 52% of the total wilderness study area. The area recommended for wilderness designation would be zoned primitive. The remaining area would be zoned natural. The fire tower, incinerator, barn, NPS training range, and Civilian Conservation Corps-era camp would be outside the wilderness study area and would continue to be retained. The fire tower, barn, and NPS training range would continue to be used for administrative purposes. The access roads to the fire tower, barn, and NPS training range would continue to be maintained for administrative uses. The buried utility communication cable that serves the Big Spring cabins and residents located further down the line would be maintained.
Park operations	Park maintenance operations would continue to be managed out of current facilities, including several Civilian Conservation Corps structures that do not meet health or safety requirements. Twenty two staff housing units would continue to be provided throughout the waterways. Twenty water systems and 23 waste water systems would continue to be provided within the waterways.	Three multioperational facilities would be constructed, one for each management district (4,500 square feet each). Maintenance and field staff offices would be consolidated into these facilities and removed from Civilian Conservation Corps structures. Approximately ten obsolete structures that are part of the deferred maintenance backlog and pose health and safety concerns would be removed and sites would be restored. Approximately four new housing duplex units to support the additional need for seasonal or term staff would be provided. No additional water systems are proposed.	One multioperational facility would be constructed. Maintenance and field staff offices would be consolidated into this facility and removed from Civilian Conservation Corps structures. Approximately ten obsolete structures that are part of the deferred maintenance backlog and pose health and safety concerns would be removed and sites would be restored. Two sustainable (current technology) sanitary systems would be installed at Akers and Pulltite to improve water quality.	Three multioperational facilities would be constructed, one for each management district (4,500 square feet each). Maintenance and field staff offices would be consolidated into these facilities and removed from Civilian Conservation Corps structures. Approximately ten obsolete structures that are part of the deferred maintenance backlog and pose health and safety concerns would be removed and sites would be restored. Approximately four new housing duplex units to support additional need for seasonal or term staff would be provided. No additional water systems are proposed.

Table 13. Summary of Key Differences Among the Alternatives (continued)

Topic	No-action alternative	Alternative A	Alternative B (NPS preferred)	Alternative C
Partnerships	Currently, there are few partnerships. Unlike most National Park units, the park unit does not have a friends group, and efforts would not be make to develop such a group. The park unit would continue to share office space at the Van Buren headquarters with other federal and state agencies. Eastern National Association would continue to provide bookstore services at park visitor contact facilities, such as the Van Buren headquarters, Round Spring, and Alley Mill.	The National Park Service would seek to develop a friends group. The park unit would continue to share office space at the Van Buren headquarters with other federal and state agencies. Eastern National Association would continue to provide bookstore services at park visitor contact facilities, such as the Van Buren headquarters, Round Spring, and Alley Mill. When the Big Spring contact facility is opened, Eastern National Association may also provide services there. The National Park Service would pursue partnerships with • volunteers and others to accomplish cultural resource stewardship projects • the counties regarding road management, including closures • the county and state to replace Cedar Grove low-water bridge with a high-water bridge • communities about waste systems to improve water quality The National Park Service would continue to partner with the state to enhance healthy native game fish populations.		